

VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #6744 2601413
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 171413Z SEP 07 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8835
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 9313
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ SEP LIMA 5398
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 0634
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 6000
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL 4067
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

UNCLAS BOGOTA 006744

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [MARR](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: GOC BREAKS UP EMERGING CRIMINAL GANG AND
INFILTRATION OF PUBLIC FORCES

REF: BOGOTA 5871

¶1. On August 31, the Colombian National Police (CNP) arrested 50 alleged members of "Los 40," an emerging criminal gang involved in violence, drug trafficking and extortion in Atlantico, Bolivar, and Magdalena departments. The group took its name from former AUC commander "Jorge 40" (demobilized in late 2006) and included members of his demobilized Bloque Norte -- once the dominant paramilitary group in the north. The GOC also disrupted an effort by 'Los 40' to infiltrate local law enforcement: arrests included 18 active duty police, two members of the Department of Administrative Security (FBI equivalent), a Colombian Marine, and a member of the Prosecutor General (Fiscalia)'s investigative unit (CTI). These arrests, added to the detention of 46 other members of the same gang in recent months, effectively dismantled the group.

¶2. The breakup of 'Los 40' followed revelations of infiltration of the Colombian Army by drug cartels and the FARC, which were also discovered and broken up. From June through August, the GOC arrested about a dozen public forces members and suspended more than 20 pending further investigation of possible involvement with the Norte de Valle drugs cartel (reftel). Both cases involved extensive, year-long investigations by the Fiscalía, in cooperation with military and police counterintelligence. Defense Vice Minister Sergio Jarmillo said the break-up of Norte de Valle druglord Diego Montoya's efforts to penetrate the Army in Valle de Cauca department enabled the military to successfully detain Montoya on September 10.

¶3. Police commanders vowed to continue operations against emerging criminal groups and to reinforce counterintelligence efforts. CNP Vice Director General Rafael Parra said, "We believe collaborators or sympathizers still remain (in the public forces), but they must be absolutely sure that we will find them and fight them." CNP Director GEN Oscar Naranjo stressed that operations against emerging armed groups will be intensified, adding that additional CNP resources -- including special Carabinero units -- would be deployed against them as part of the effort. "Against the threat of criminal gangs," Naranjo emphasized, "the institutional response is twofold: attacks on the groups, and the message of zero tolerance against corruption in the public forces."

Brownfield